

CHAPTER - 1

NORTH AMERICA

Introduction

Latitude : 7° 12' N to 83° 38' N Longitude : 12° 08' W to 172° 30' W

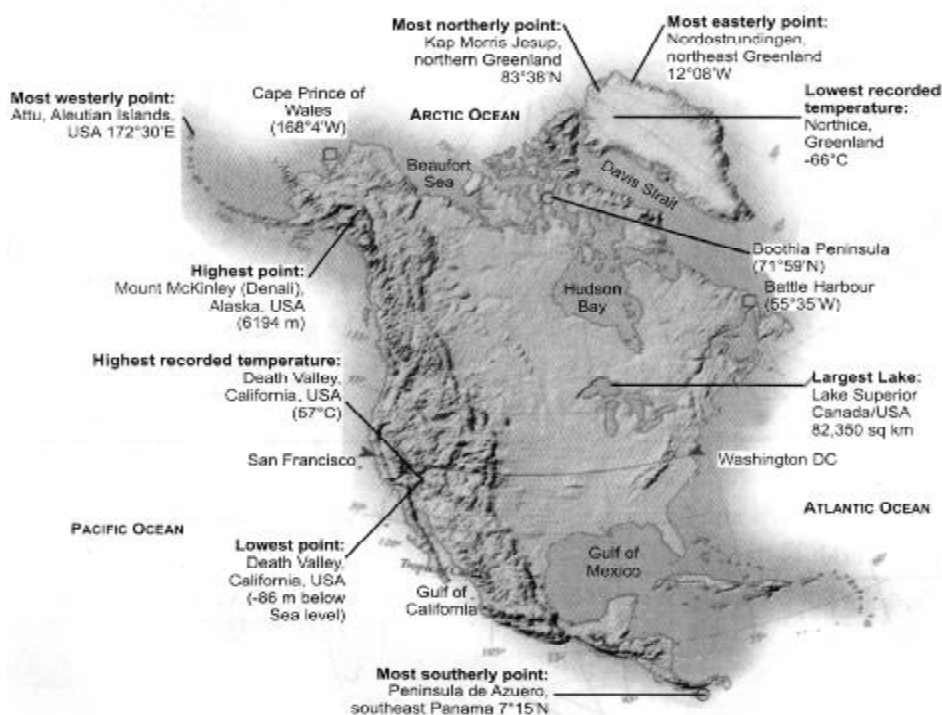
Area : 2,42,38,000 sq. km (including Greenland and the Caribbean Islands).

Population : 13.6 million

Situation : North America is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean in the east, Gulf of Mexico in the south, the Pacific Ocean in the west and the Arctic Ocean in the north. To the north it is separated from the easternmost tip of Siberia by the Bering Strait.

Size : third largest continent after Asia and Africa.

- 49° N latitude forms the boundary between Canada and U.S.A.
- The 100°W longitude divides North America into more or less two equal parts.



North America Physical

Important Seas, Bays and Gulfs

Name	Location and Related Information	Part of Ocean
Beaufort Sea	North of Canada.	Arctic Ocean
Gulf of Boothia	Between Boothia Peninsula and Baffin Island, North of Canada	Arctic Ocean
Baffin Bay	Between Greenland and Baffin Island.	Atlantic Ocean



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Name	Location and Related Information	Part of Ocean
Hudson Bay	North of Canada.	Atlantic Ocean
James Bay	North of Canada.	Atlantic Ocean
Labrador Sea	East of Labrador, Canada.	Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of St. Lawarance	Northeast of USA St. Lawrence River drains.	Atlantic Ocean
Bay of Fundy	Between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Site of highest tides.	Atlantic Ocean
Chesapeake Bay	Between Virginia and Maryland (Longest offshore bar in the world)	Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Mexico	East of Central America Mississippi River drains.	Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Campeche	East of Mexico.	Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Darien	Between Panama City and South America.	Caribbean Sea, Atlantic Ocean
Caribbean Sea	East of Central America, known for hurricane generation.	Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Panama	Between Central America and South America	Pacific Ocean
Coronado Bay	West of Costa Rica.	Pacific Ocean
Gulf of California	Between Lower California and Western Mexico. Colorado river drains.	Pacific Ocean
Gulf of Alaska	South of Alaska.	Pacific Ocean
Bering Sea	West of Alaska. Between North America and Asia.	Pacific Ocean
Ellesmere Island, Queen Elizabeth Islands, Parry Islands, Banks Island, Victoria Island (Third largest island of the Arctic Ocean), Prince of Wales Island	North of Canada	Arctic Ocean
Baffin Island (Second largest island of the Arctic Ocean)	Representative example of ice cap, a type of continental glacier, many serrated granitic ridges.	Arctic Ocean



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Name	Location and Related Information	Part of Ocean
Southampton Island, Coats Island, Mancel Island, Ottawa Island, Belcher Island	North to South in Hudson Bay	
Anticostal Island	Gulf of St. Lawrence.	Atlantic Ocean
Cape Breton Island	Navascotia Region known for coal fields.	Atlantic Ocean
Florida Keys	Many small islands of coral origin, situated to the south of Miami between Cuba and Miami Region of sponges harvesting which support a thriving sponge industry.	Atlantic Ocean
Bahama Island	Coral Island, SE of Florida	Atlantic Ocean
Caicos Island (U.K.)	SE of Bahama Island	Atlantic Ocean
Vancouver Island	West of Canada.	Pacific Ocean
Queen Charlotte Island	North of Vancouver Island	Pacific Ocean
Alexander Archipelago (A group of islands that lie in close proximity)	West of Canada	Pacific Ocean
Kodiak Island	Gulf of Alaska	Pacific Ocean
St. Lawrence Island (Near Bering Strait) Nunivak Island	Bering Sea.	Pacific Ocean
Aleutian Island	Extend south-southwest for 1800 km from Alaska Peninsula	Pacific Ocean
Hawaiian Island (Part of the USA)	Lie in the northern limits of the tropics in the North Pacific Ocean. • Consist of 8 main, 15 small-uninhabited islands. • Island's Capital Honolulu is known as "The cross roads of the Pacific."	Pacific Ocean

Important Straits

Strait : A narrow sea passage that links two larger area of seas.

Name	Separates	Connects
Nares Straits	Greenland and Ellesmere Island	Arctic Ocean and Baffin Bay
Davis Strait	Greenland and Baffin Island	Baffin Bay and Labrador Sea.

Name	Separates	Connects
Hudson Strait	Baffin Island and Ungava Peninsula (Qubec)	Hudson Bay and Labrador Sea.
Belle Isle Strait	Labrador and New Foundland	Gulf of St. Lawrence and Atlantic Ocean
Florida Strait	Florida and Cuba.	Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean
Yucatan Strait	Yucatan Peninsula (NE Mexico) and Cuba	Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean
Juan de Fucca Strait	Washington and Vancouver Island	
Bering Strait	Chukchi Peninsula, Russia (Asia) and Alaska (North America)	

Important Lakes of North America

1. **Great Bear Lake:** Lake of North West Territories through which Arctic Circle pass. At Port Radium valuable deposits of pitchblende exist.
2. **Great Slave Lake:** Lake lies in the North West Territories of Canada. On the shore copper and gold are worked.
3. **Athabasca Lake:** Uranium city lies on the north shore of lake, where pitchblende is found.
4. **Reindeer Lake:** Water flow north-eastwards to Hudson Bay via the Churchill River.
5. **Lake Winnipeg:** Lake of Manitoba is a remnant of glacial Lake Agassiz Saskatchewan River drains into the lake. Also the water flows north eastwards and Hudson Bay via Nelson River.



6. Great Lakes (HOMES)

- (i) L. Superior (S)
- (ii) L. Michigan (M)

Information

Connected to the Atlantic Ocean by the St. Lawrence Seaway, to the



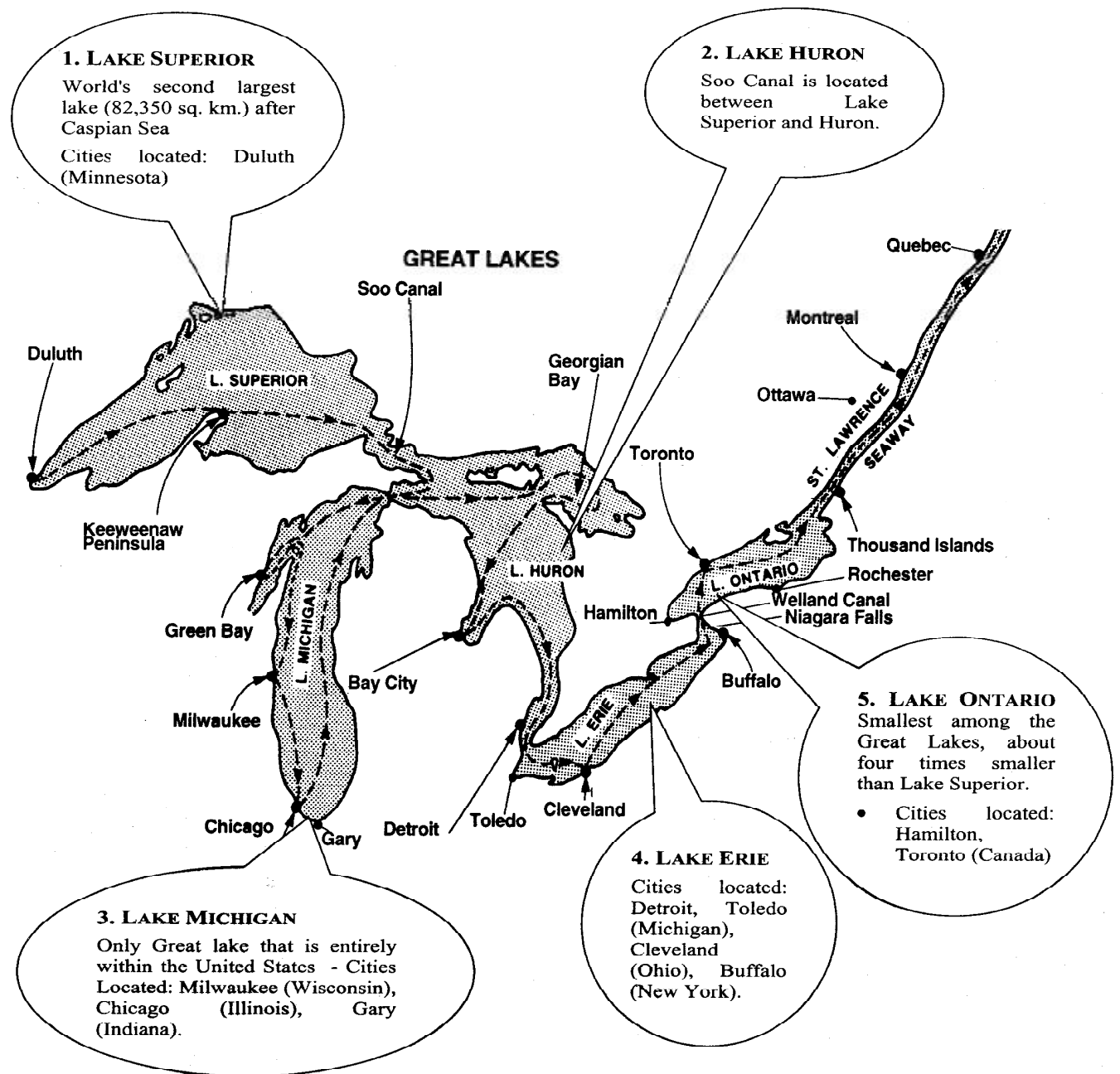
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(iii) L. Huron (H)	Gulf of Mexico via the Illinois water way and the Mississippi River, and to New York through the Hudon River.
(iv) L. Erie (E)	
(v) L. Ontario (O)	
7. <i>Great Salt Lake:</i>	Located in Utah (U.S.A) Remnant of Fresh lake called Bonneville.
8. <i>Lake Mead:</i>	Located in Nevada (U.S.A.) Reservoir of Hoover and Boulder dam of Colorado River.
9. <i>Lake of the Ozark</i>	Located in Missouri (U.S.A.)
10. <i>For Peck Lake:</i>	Located in Montana (U.S.A.)

GREAT LAKES IN ORDER OF SIZE AND IMPORTANT CITIES AROUND THEM



IMPORTANT RIVERS OF NORTH AMERICA

Rivers of Canada

Important Rivers	Source	Outflow
Mackenzie (longest river of Canada)	Head of Finlay River (British Columbia)	Beaufort Sea.
Yukon	Junction of Lewis and Pelly Rivers	Bering Sea.
Nelson	Head of Bow River (Canada)	Hudson Bay.
Saskatchewan	Rocky Mountain	L. Winnipeg
Peace (Bennett Dam is located on the Peace river)	Stikine Mountain	Lake Athabasca



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RIVERS OF USA

Important Rivers	Information	Source	Outflow
Mississippi-Missouri River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deha - Bird's Foot Delta (New Orleans is located) • St. Louis is located on the confluence of Mississippi and Missouri River. • Major tributaries are the Ohio (eastern) and the Arkansas (western) • One of the world's largest watershed which includes atleast 25 states. 	Red Rock of Montana	Gulf of Mexico.
St. Lawrence River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busiest inland waterway in North America. • Iroquois dam and locks, and Niagara Falls are located. 	Lake Ontario	Gulf of St. Lawrence.
Colorado River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tributaries : Little Colorado, • Green river and River Gita • Hoover and Boulder Dam are the main dams on Colorado River. • Imperial valley (an area of inland drainage) of the Colorado River is an important region for cotton cultivation 	Grand Country	Gulf of California
Columbia River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snake River is the main or biggest tributary of Columbia River. • Part of the basin is situated in Washington, Idaho, and Canadian Province of British Columbia. • The longest river or USA which drains into the Pacific Ocean. • Grand Coulee, Bonneville and Chief Joseph are main dams on Columbia River. 		Pacific Ocean
Sacramento River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It flows through Central Valleys and Shasta, Keswick, etc. are main dams on the Sacramento River. 	Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountains	Pacific Ocean
San Joaquin River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friant Dam is built on it. 	Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountains	Pacific Ocean
Rio Grande River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It forms the natural boundary between USA and Mexico 		Gulf of Mexico



IMPORTANT MOUNTAINS RANGES OF NORTH AMERICA

Brook's Range

- Located in Northern Alaska. Extends in the east-west direction and is a continuation of the Rockies.

The Alaska and Aleutian Ranges

- Terminate in the Aleutian islands, are part of the Pacific Mountain Systems.
- Mount McKinley (6194 m) is the highest peak of North America is in the Alaska Range.

Western Cordillera

They are made up of three almost parallel ranges, running north to south.

(i) Coast Mountains

- Mount Logan (6050 m) in the Yukon Territory (Canada) is the second highest peak of North America.

(ii) (a) Cascade Range

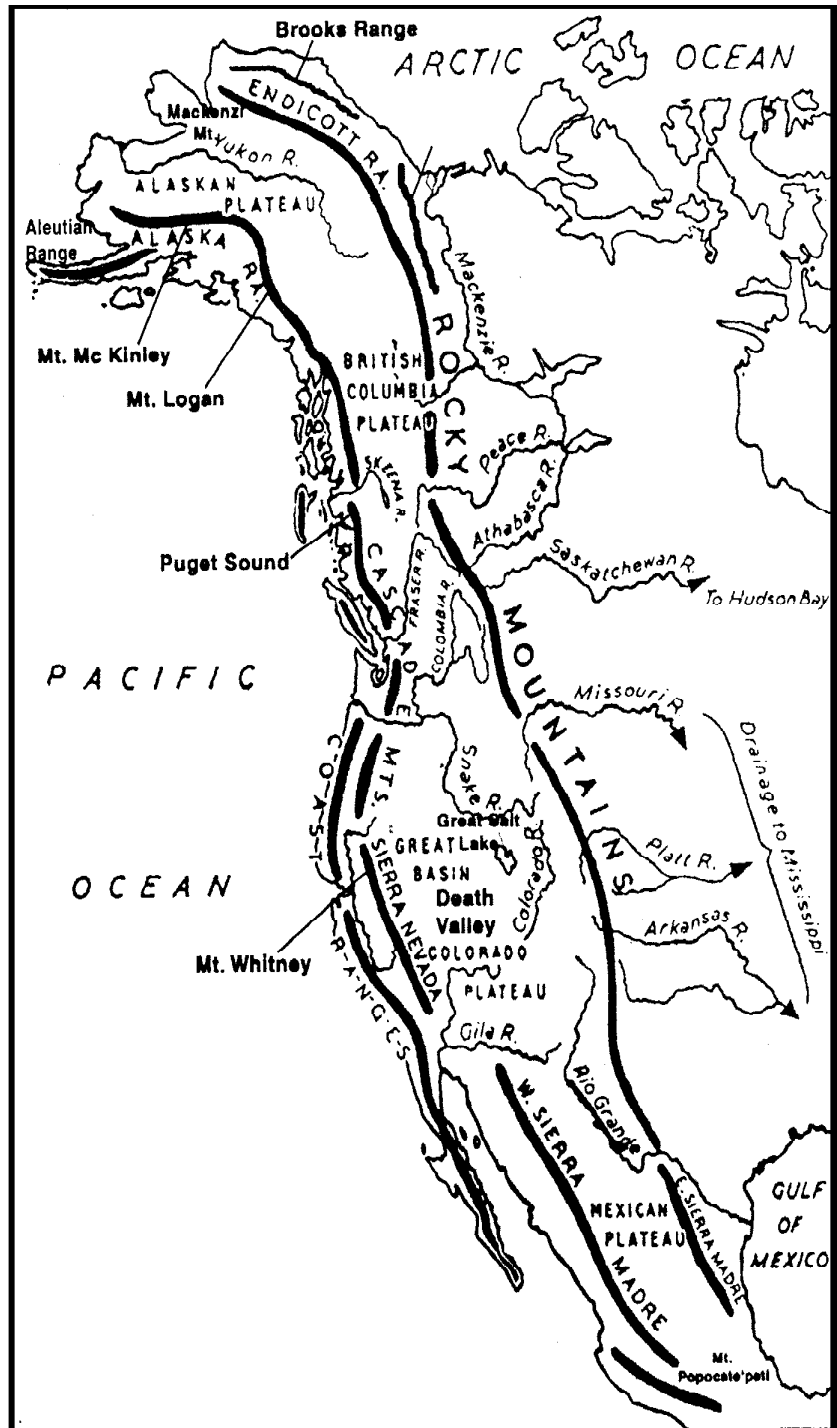
- East of Coast Mountain, running from the North California to Washington.
- Mount Whitney (4418 m) is the highest peak of USA.

(b) Sierra Nevada

- From south of Cascade Range to southern California along the Pacific coast.

(iii) Rocky Mountains

- Lies east of the Cascade range and Sierra Nevada, running from Alaska to Mexico and is over 4000 m.
- It is the easternmost and is the highest range among the western Cordilleras.
- West of the Rockies lies a region of table-lands, basins, canyons and deserts.



San Andreas fault - World's largest manifestation of surface transform fault.

Aniakchak in Alaska - Active volcano

Popocatepetl in Mexico - Active volcanoes

Puget Sound - Depression between mainland and the islands.



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Wasatch Mountain

- Located in Utah
- An example of Block Mountain

Sierra Madre Occidental

- Located in the Western Mexico

Henry Mountain

Sierra Madre Oriental

- Located in Utah.
- An example of Laccolith.
- Located in the E

Western Coastal Plain

- It is bordered by the Pacific Ocean with a 2,080 km coast and 12,369 km shoreline
- Pacific coastal plain is much narrower than the eastern coastal plain
- Pacific coastal plain is much narrower than the eastern coastal plain
- California, Oregon and Washington lies along the Pacific coast.

Important Plateaus and Basins

Name	Information
Intermontane Plateau (Partly or fully enclosed by mountain)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West of Rockies lies a region of plateaus, basins and deserts.
Yukon-Kushokun Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located between the Brooks and Alaska Range. • An intermontane plateau or basin which is dissected by many rivers.
Columbai-Snake Plateau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupies western Washington between the Rocky and Cascade Mountains. • An example of Lava Plateau or Plateau of Accumulation which is formed of Basalt. • The chief rivers draining in this region is the Columbia and its tributary Snake river on which Grand Coulee dam (Washington) is located.
Great Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located between Sierra Nevada in the west and Wasatch Mountain on the Rockies in the east. • It is really a plateau, which has been Block-faulted, Block sections of the Plateau now form Block mountain. Some of the depression of Great Basin have no external drainage. • An example of <i>Basin and Range</i> type of Topography.
Colorado Plateau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intermontane plateau which is located between the Rocky Mountain and Sierra Nevada, is a hot desert region. In some parts flat topped mesas and buttes are found.
Maxican Plateau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located between Sierra Madre Occidental and Sierra Madre Oriental in Mexico. Some parts have Basin-and-Range landscape.
Death valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lies west of the Rockies Mountain in California. • Deepest point (85 m below sea-level) of North America. • Highest diurnal range of temperature in the world is recorded here.

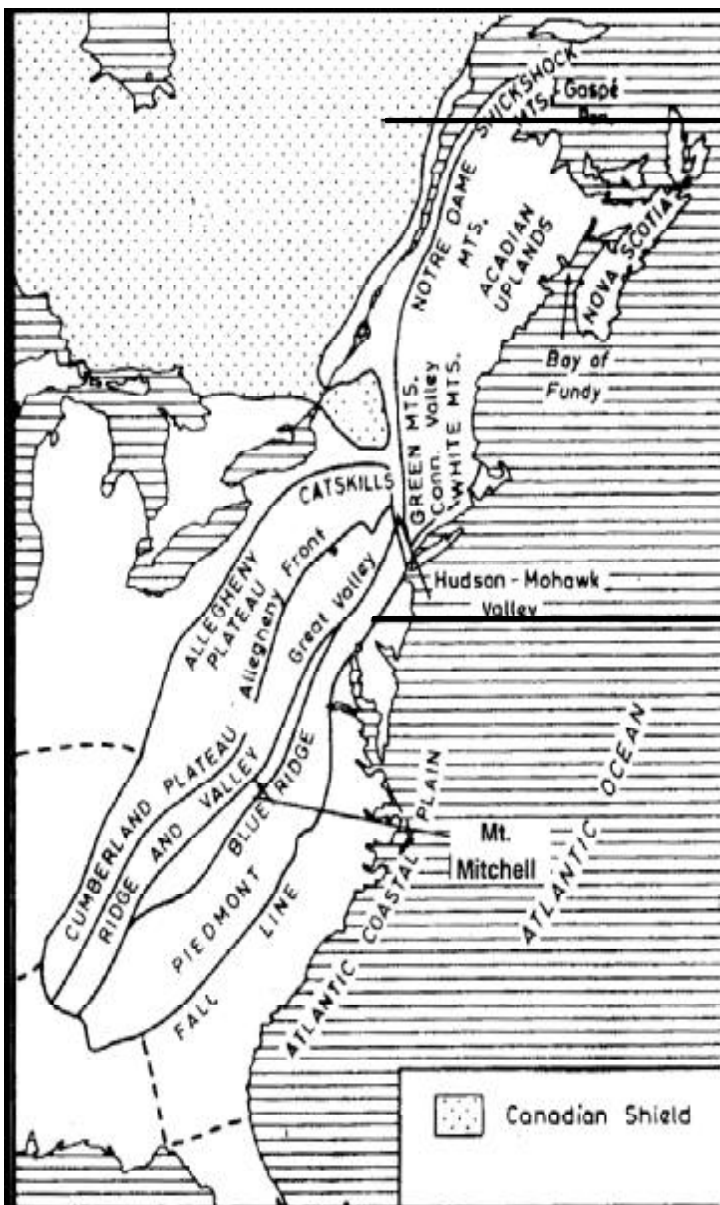


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San Jauquin Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lies between California and Rockies in California. Friant dam is located.
Central Lowlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descends from the Rockies Mountain in the form of steps. Many lacustrine lakes are located. Relatively undisturbed by the crustal movements of the earth.
Great Plains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural plains formed by the River Mississippi and River Missouri.
Gulf Coastal Plain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Region of wheat cultivation in summer and winter. Plain formed by the Mississippi-Missouri river system.



Canadian Shield

- Region of northeast Canada, including Laurentian Plateau.
- Made of Precambrian rocks, very rich in mineral resources.
- Some hollows carved by ice sheet make deranged drainage system.

Laurentian Plateau

- Part of Canadian Shield, situated to the North west of Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Appalachian Mountain System

- Remains of ancient fold mountain
- Lies along the Atlantic coast, extending southwards from Quebec (Canada) to Central Alabama (U.S.A.)
- Highest peak - Mount Mitchell on Blue Ridge (North Carolina)
- Orogeny - Caledonian.
- An example of mountain system, formed in a single period includes the smaller ranges such as the Poconos, Adirondack mountains and, further south, the Allegheny, Blue Ridge, and Great Smoky Ranges.

Adirondack Mountain

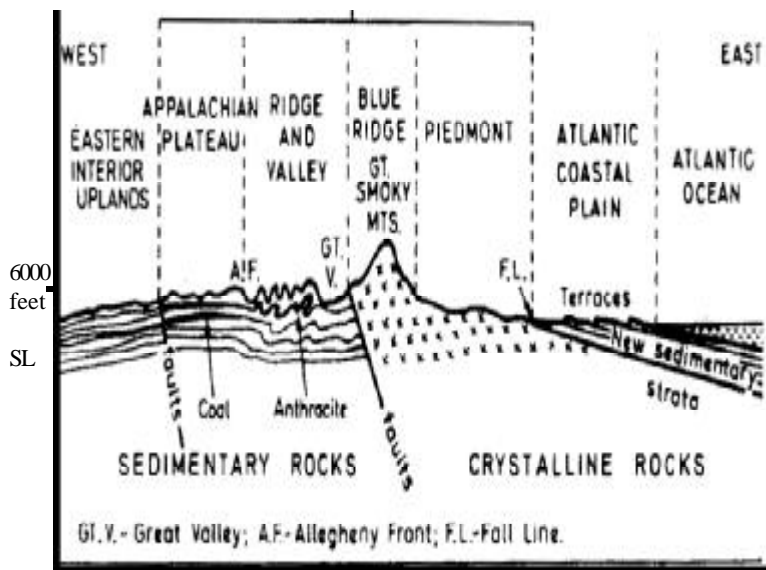
- Joined to Canadian Shield and is located between Lake Ontario and Gulf of St. Lawrence.



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A general section across the Appalachians and the bordering areas.

- Geologically rich iron ore (magnetic) region.

Blue Ridge

- An example of mountain ridge which was formed due to local folding and faulting from the adjoining regions.

Appalachian Plateau

- An uplifted peneplain which comprised of Cumberland Plateau (Kentucky), Allegheny Plateau.

Cumberland Plateau

- West of Appalachian Mountains in Kentucky.

Important Peninsula

Ungava Peninsula

- Located in North Canada, which is surrounded by Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait.

Yucatan Peninsula

- Deepest place of Mexico
- An example of Karst of Limestone topography.

Kenai Peninsula

- Lies between Cook Inlet and the Gulf of Alaska in Alaska (U.S.A.)
- Known for its petroleum resources.

Atlantic Coastal Plain

- It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean with a coastline (3,329 km) and a (46,143 km) shoreline.
- Northeastward flowing stream of warm water is Gulf Stream moderate the climate of region and make it an important region for fishing.



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